

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Stephen P. Sinnott, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Philip Schuth, DOB 10/12/52, of La Crosse, Wisconsin, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Madison to social security fraud. Schuth pleaded guilty to intentionally concealing the death of his mother, Edith Schuth, from the Social Security Administration. As a result of Schuth's actions, the Social Security Administration continued to pay benefits to Edith Schuth, through direct-deposits to a checking account in the name of Edith Schuth or Philip Schuth. During the period from August 15, 2000 to April 23, 2005, the Social Security Administration overpaid approximately \$35,690.

When Schuth was interviewed by law enforcement officers following his arrest in April 2005, he said that his mother died on August 15, 2000 and that he concealed her death because he was afraid people would think that he had killed her. Schuth also indicated that he needed her social security benefits to pay the property taxes on the home he shared with his mother.

Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb scheduled sentencing for July 19, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. Schuth faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

The charges against Schuth are the result of an investigation conducted by the

Social Security Administration-Office of Investigations; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; La Crosse County Sheriff's Department; Dane County Sheriff's Department-Bomb Squad; Vernon County Sheriff's Department; La Crosse Police Department; Onalaska Police Department; and the Campbell Police Department. The prosecution of this case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel J. Graber.

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